

ABROAD

WARSAW

This Enemy

The Roman Catholic Church of Poland is deeply disturbed by the refusal of the Communist government to respect agreements made during the social and political upheaval of the Solidarity movement two years ago. An agreement guaranteeing freedom of religion, in return for a reciprocal acknowledgment of the rights of the socialist state, has never been officially promulgated. Two-thirds of a draft of the agreement was at one point accepted by the state authorities; now even that has been withdrawn. Another cause of tension is the project for an agricultural foundation supervised by the Church and supported by private funds from the West. There is no question about the poverty of rural infrastructures in Poland (there are very few telephones and hardly any village water systems; only a quarter of the roads are paved). The law creating the foundation was passed by the Diet in April 1984, but so far the government has refused to authorize it, costing the foundation \$18 million in forfeited gifts. Still another grievance concerns the ecclesiastical press. In a country that is 98 per cent Catholic, only 33 periodicals of a total of 2,766 are Church-connected. Another broken promise: that school textbooks would be revised toward greater respect for spiritual belief and away from propaganda for atheism. "In our system," said the Primate of Poland, Cardinal Glemp, in a recent sermon, "there is a fixed idea that there must be a class enemy, and where there is no class enemy, any other enemy will do. . . . [Today] the enemy is the Church."

PARIS

Carrier Momentum

The Defense Ministry has decided to build a new nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to maintain the credibility of France's military power. The vessel, bearing the illustrious name of *Richelieu*, will take its place with the fleet in ten years. Construction will require 12 million man-hours (there is as yet no monetary estimate). The ability to intervene from a base that has no territorial, and little diplomatic, restriction is an immense advantage in creating "a common frontier" with almost any adversary, say French naval spokesmen. The common-frontier theory rests on the fact that two-thirds of the world's population, and therefore industry, is concentrated within 250 miles of the sea, and thus within range of the carrier's aircraft. The navy's present carrier, the *Clemenceau*, is due to go out of service in 1992. This would leave a four-year gap before the *Richelieu*'s commissioning.

KIEV

Ukrainian Corruption

Mikhail Gorbachev's campaign against corruption has been carried to the vast and fertile expanses of the Ukraine, where a number of important Communist Party functionaries have recently been fired or reprimanded. The ostensible reason was a loss of agricultural production and a decline in industrial output. Automobile shortfalls alone cost the economy 200 million rubles (\$240 million at the official rate) over the last five years. "One has to say frankly

that unpleasant trends have arisen," according to one of the government's chief prosecutors, Aleksandr Rekunkov. "The problems of drunkenness, parasitism, and unearned income were aggravated." But foreign observers believe that the principal aim of the purge in the Ukraine is to get rid of former Chairman Leonid Brezhnev's last followers, and particularly Politburo member Vladimir Shcherbitsky, who is also the Party chief of the region. Shcherbitsky has criticized Gorbachev for his reporting of the results of the Geneva Summit, and for his military policy.

ROME

Singing

The Mafia has an opera at last. It is called *Salvatore Giuliano* and is based on the life of the famous Mafioso who conducted a reign of terror—and of glamor—in Sicily in the late 1940s. He was finally killed in 1950 by a cousin who betrayed him and who was himself subsequently poisoned in prison. In the opera, Giuliano is shot by someone planted in the audience. This device was invented, according to the composer, Lorenzo Ferrero, in order to "keep up the doubts about who really shot him dead." The opera, staged at the Rome Opera House in a production that includes the blowing up of vintage cars, is one act long. It is paired for the occasion with the nineteenth-century *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Mascagni, which is also set in Sicily. The opera has been running simultaneously with the mass trial of 474 Mafia suspects in Palermo.

MARNE-LA-VALLEE

Disneyville

The choice of the Marne Valley, close to Paris, as the site of the Disney entertainment center in Europe—Disneyville—has drawn a rash of hostile letters and editorials in the French press. One letter writer in *Le Monde* compares Disneyville to an industrial disaster in terms of cultural pollution. Another denounced it as a "sanctuary of fast food and gadgets parachuted at the gates of what was once the City of Light." A third proposed a counterweight: the establishment of "Europe Houses" in the United States, which would present European painting, music, and cultural lectures. "But," added the correspondent forebodingly, "will the Americans who come to hear and see these things prove as numerous as the masses of Europeans who will be stupefying themselves in the tinselled uproar of this leisure park?"



"Miss Wicksteed? We do make aircraft carriers, don't we?"

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